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The Arab Nationalist Movement

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The Arab Nationalist Movement

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THE tendency toward the development of a new Arab power in Western Asia is a feature of Near Eastern political life which gives concern to all foreign nations having a stake in that region. Arab nationalism is becoming an increasingly incalculable element in the Asiatic scene. It has largely displaced religious and sectarian strife as a major preoccupation of the Arab mind. It has seriously interfered with European plans for administration of the land-bridge between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf. It has transformed political life in the Arabian Peninsula.

The region affected by Arab nationalism comprises about three and a half million square miles. The movement is strongest in Egypt, the mandated territories of Syria, the Lebanese Republic, Palestine and Transjordan, and the three independent states of Iraq, Yaman, and the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia. It has ramifications throughout North Africa in Libya, Tunisia, Algeria and Morocco, and has left its mark also on the narrow fringe of British-protected principalities along the southern and eastern coasts of the Arabian Peninsula.

This entire region, stretching from the Atlantic to the Arabian Sea, was included in the Arab Empire of the medieval period. At the time of the Norman Conquest of England and for the two succeeding centuries it was still the centre of Western culture, fostering scientific inquiry and making notable contributions to the sciences of astronomy, mathematics and medicine, as well as to literature and philosophy. Later, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, it fell prey to the Ottoman Turks and relapsed into a long period of decadence. Partitioned ultimately among European colonizing states, the various political units of the Arab Empire have retained little of their former cohesive-

ness. However, a common religion, language and historical tradition and a sense of somewhat attenuated kinship furnish the elements required for a widespread Arab nationalist revival.

These various units do not enjoy equal prospects of independence for the future. Spain, France and Italy have no intention of relaxing their hold on North Africa. Great Britain does not wish to relinquish its spheres of influence along the Arabian coastline. From Egypt it has shown a willingness to withdraw, but only on conditions which are unacceptable to the Egyptians, so that negotiations looking toward British evacuation have been at a standstill since 1930.¹ From the mandated territories, on the contrary, it will be obligatory for the French and British mandatory powers to withdraw eventually, if Article XXII of the League Covenant is faithfully carried out.

By extreme Arab nationalists no differentiation is made between these countries on the score of their apparent political prospects, as the Arab National Pact of December 1931 indicates.² In general, however, the immediate hopes of the nationalists centre in the Asiatic portions of the Arabic-speaking world.

1. For the separate development of modern nationalism in Egypt, cf. Elizabeth P. MacCallum, "Egyptian Nationalism and British Imperial Interests," and "Egypt, a Decade of Political Development," *Foreign Policy Association, Information Service*, August 3, 1927 and January 7, 1931.

2. The Pact is comprehended in three clauses: (1) Arab countries are declared to be an indivisible unit; the Arab Nation cannot recognize its dismemberment; (2) the inhabitants of all Arab lands must concentrate their energies on the achievement of independence and oppose themselves to separatist tendencies; (3) imperialism in all its forms is denounced as being incompatible with Arab aims; the Arab nation will combat it with all the resources at its disposal. The pact was sworn to by representatives from Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria,

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NATURE AND ORIGIN OF ARAB NATIONALISM

The Arab awakening is both cultural and political. In its cultural aspect it combines a revival of classical Arab learning with an adaptation of modern Western knowledge to the requirements of Oriental living. In its political aspect it is an attempt to build up a bloc of independent Arab states, whose integrity will be respected and whose joint influence in international affairs will be comparable to that of European states.

The nationalist movement may be said to owe its existence and strength to three unrelated sources—Islamic tradition, the contagion of foreign ideas, and reaction against alien domination.

Islam in its earliest period was not merely a state religion but itself a state, governed under the direction of a Caliph in accordance with the *Shar'*, or religious law. Because of the diffusion of Islam through many lands, the office of Caliph lost all practical significance several centuries before its extinction in 1924. Occasional attempts were made during the late Ottoman period to revive the genuine authority of the Caliphs. Thus Jamal al-Din al-Afghani (1839-1897) won support throughout the greater part of the Orient for an abortive project for uniting all Muslims under a single government directed once more by a Caliph.⁴

Traditions of Islamic unity make a particularly strong appeal to Arabs, who for reasons of sentiment are accorded a unique position in Islam and will naturally profit from any increase in the strength of Islam as a whole. They have not given up hope of reviving an Arab Caliphate,⁵ but realize that there must be greater cohesiveness within the Arab world itself before such a step becomes possible. Ibn Sa'ud, unifier of the greater part of the Arabian Peninsula, is often suggested for the rôle of Caliph. Up to the present, however, Arabs have capitalized their special position in the Islamic world only by establishing a General Muslim Conference, with headquarters in Jerusalem, to stimulate Muslim resentment against British, French and Jewish encroachment on Arab territory in Western Asia. The Conference has opened

branches throughout the Islamic world and has had considerable success in winning moral and financial support for the Arab nationalist cause, particularly in India.

The contagion of nationalist ideas from the West first reached Asiatic Arabs after the Napoleonic wars, during the brief administration of Mehemet Ali, Viceroy of Egypt. Schools began to concern themselves with Arab history and Arabic literature, while anti-Turkish sentiment was allowed free expression. After the return of the Turks, foreign missionary institutions, both French Catholic and American Protestant, kept up the Arabic studies begun under the Egyptian régime. With the help of foreign printing presses the vogue of the Arabic classics increased rapidly. When an Arabic dictionary appeared in 1867 and an Arabic encyclopedia in 1870, already a general revival of Arab learning was well under way. Newspapers were founded. The language was extended and enriched and a contemporary Arabic literature came into being.

Meanwhile foreign educators and merchants were popularizing the principles of the French and American revolutions. Syrian emigrants in North and South America reported favorably on conditions of life abroad. Envidable standards of living prevalent in the West came to be associated with democratic institutions. By these means, and through the agency of the Syrian and Egyptian press, the ground was prepared by 1914 for mass conversions to Western democratic principles. When the World War released the nationalist ambitions of all subjugated peoples in Europe, the Arabs of Egypt and Western Asia eagerly adopted the watchword of national self-determination. President Wilson's Fourteen Points created intense excitement. Never had Arabic-speaking Asia been as susceptible to foreign political doctrines as at the termination of the world conflict, when the nationalist movement entered on the most vigorous phase it had yet experienced.⁶

THE HISTORY OF THE MOVEMENT

The Arab National Committee, founded in Paris in 1895 under the leadership of the Egyptian patriot, Mustapha Pasha Kamel, was the first formal Arab nationalist organization. Its aim was the creation of an Arab state independent of Turkey, comprising both the Peninsula and the Arabic-speaking territories north of it, under a constitutional Arab

Palestine, Iraq and the Arabian Peninsula. Full text in *Oriente Moderno*, January 1932, p. 43.

4. Charles C. Adams, *Islam and Modernism in Egypt* (New York, Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 13.

5. King Husain of the Hijaz assumed the title of Caliph in 1924 immediately after the republican government at Angora deposed the last of the Ottoman Caliphs. Husain was unable to defend the title, however, and lost it in October 1924.

6. For a fuller account, cf. Hans Kohn, *A History of Nationalism in the East* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, 1929), p. 266-318.

monarch. A Committee of Decentralization, with headquarters in Cairo, favored autonomy for the Arab provinces—control of defense, finance and foreign relations being left to the Constantinople government. The first decade of the twentieth century saw a mushroom growth of nationalist committees and clubs, particularly in Syria,⁷ all of which opposed continued Turkish domination.

An Arab officer, Shawkat Pasha, played a leading rôle in the Young Turkish revolution of 1908. For a short period the Arab provinces expected home rule as a result of the Young Turks' coup d'état, but the new administration embarked instead on a vigorous program of cultural assimilation which greatly embittered the Arabs. An Arab Congress met at Paris in 1911 and issued once more a demand for complete independence. Concessions were promised by the Turks, but these remained a dead letter. Secret societies spread, the two most influential being *al-'Ahd*, a purely military organization, and *al-Qahtaniyah*, open to civilians. The Reform Club was closed in Beirut in 1913, precipitating a general strike. Arab nationalist leaders commenced to speak in terms of a 1923 revolt, after ten years of careful preparation, and began to canvass for foreign aid.^{7a}

WARTIME ACTIVITIES

The World War broke out nine years before Arab nationalist leaders had expected to be ready for a conflict. Their predicament was threefold. To accept either British and French inducements to rebel against Turkey or German inducements to remain loyal would in all probability signify British, French or German domination after the war. Independent resistance was impossible. Yet to continue in submission to Turkey was to invite perpetuation of existing conditions.

Arab fears of European domination were not without justification. Pressure of international rivalry was strong in the so-called Fertile Crescent north of the Syrian desert—the land-bridge between the Mediterranean and Persian Gulf which provides the shortest route from Europe to the East. At the close of the Ottoman period France and Great Britain, Germany, Russia, Italy and the Jews all cherished designs on some part of Syria or Mesopotamia. None had yet acquired an actual foothold, although France since 1861 had been guarantor of the autonomy of Mt. Lebanon, while Russia was the recognized protector of Greek Or-

thodox Christians. Jewish colonization of Palestine had already begun under both Zionist and non-Zionist auspices. Germany was pushing its plans for through railway connections from Hamburg to the Persian Gulf.

In the Arabian Peninsula the British had established a certain amount of political control. In 1839 they had taken possession of Aden.⁸ In 1857 they had occupied the Island of Perim, guarding the narrow outlet from the Red Sea. By a series of treaties with individual sheikhs and princes they had assumed control of the external relations of all but a few sections of the southern and eastern coastal territories.⁹ In 1914 the only important section of the eastern coastal strip not in British hands was al-Hasa. Other foreign powers, particularly France, Russia and Italy, were effectively shut out.

In the remainder of the Peninsula Turkey claimed suzerainty, but did not exercise it uniformly. The Hijaz was under effective control, 'Asir was kept in submission the greater part of the time, but Yaman was turbulent and rebellious, an incessant drain on Ottoman exchequer and army alike, although it was the most fertile and populous region of the Peninsula. Here the Imam Yahya had forced the Turks first to recognize him as a religious leader and then, in 1911, to grant Yaman a mediatized status under his immediate control. He desired complete independence, but like other Arab leaders in the Peninsula feared that withdrawal of Turkish garrisons would be the signal for British occupation and was therefore content with autonomy. In Central Arabia Ibn Rashid and Ibn Sa'ud were contending for an area the size of France; here Turkish control was non-existent.

The diversity of political conditions in the Arab provinces naturally resulted in a diversity of response to Turkey's declaration of war in November 1914. Because Syria was regarded as a hotbed of sedition the Turkish government dispatched Jemal Pasha, an ardent champion of Arab assimilation, to take charge of affairs in Damascus. He inaugurated a reign of terror throughout Syria, his executions taking heavy toll of leading Arab families. The inhabitants were soon reduced to a state of panic-stricken submissiveness. Nationalist leadership then passed to the Peninsula.

Here the British succeeded in winning three

7. Including a Committee of Eighty-Four (half Muslim, half Christian in membership), a Reform Club—both in Beirut—and *La Ligue de la Partie Arabe* in Paris. Cf. *The Arab Federation* (Jerusalem), June 13, 1934.

7a. *Ibid.*, June 16, 1934.

8. Described as the only capacious, sheltered, reef-free harbor in the Peninsula. D. G. Hogarth, *Arabia* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1922), p. 108.

9. In the British treaty system were included the sheikhs of the Hadhramaut, the Sultan of Muscat, the sheikhs of Trucial Oman and the rulers of Qatar, Kuwait and the Bahrain islands. For a full account, cf. A. T. Wilson, *The Persian Gulf* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1928), *passim*.

allies—first the Idrisi of 'Asir (April 1915), then Ibn Sa'ud of Najd (December 1915), and finally Sharif Husain of the Hijaz (June 1916). Husain spent eight months bargaining with the British before agreeing to revolt against the Turks, the British having promised to support Arab independence in the greater part of the Fertile Crescent and the Peninsula.¹⁰ Ibn Sa'ud relinquished control of the external relations of Najd and al-Hasa in return for a subsidy and the prospect of close friendly relations with the British. Ibn Rashid of Hail remained loyal to Turkey, while Yaman announced its neutrality.

Husain threw himself immediately into the revolt against Turkey, accepting British advice and liberal financial assistance, but avoiding a British occupation of the Hijaz. The campaign, led by Husain's son Faisal and directed by Colonel T. E. Lawrence, contributed materially to the collapse of the German and Turkish defense in 1918.¹¹ Faisal was established in Damascus and Arab nationalists confidently looked forward to the creation of an independent Arab kingdom in Syria.¹²

EFFECTS OF POST-WAR SETTLEMENT

Anglo-French rivalry, rather than wartime pledges to the Arabs, decided the actual terms of the post-war settlement. Independence was denied the Arabs of the north, who were subjected for an indeterminate period to British and French control under the League mandate system. The Peninsula, in a less important strategic position, was left to work out its own destiny with the assistance of the British government, which stood in a special relation to all rulers in the area except Ibn Rashid of Hail and Imam Yahya of Yaman.

THE PENINSULA

Three phases have marked the post-war achievements of nationalism in the Peninsula—first, the elimination of British influence from all but the coastal fringe; secondly, the organization of a stable Arab government; and thirdly, the formula-

ro. The precise extent of these promises is not yet known owing to the refusal of successive British governments to publish the full text of the correspondence with Husain. For one of the fullest available accounts, cf. H. St. J. Philby, *Arabia* (London, Benn, 1930), p. 238-249. For Husain's war proclamation, cf. Snouck Hurgronje, *The Revolt in Arabia* (New York, Putnam, 1917), p. 43-50.

II. Liddell Hart, *Colonel Lawrence, the Man Behind the Legend* (Toronto, Dodd, Mead, 1934), p. 274, 302-04.

12. For Allied promises that the Arabs should retain all territory they occupied in advance of Allied forces, cf. *ibid.*, p. 309. For further promises that they should be allowed to choose their own governments freely, cf. Elizabeth P. MacCallum, "Iraq and the British Treaties," Foreign Policy Association, *Information Service*, August 20, 1930, p. 229.



tion of a basis for cooperation between independent Arab states. It still remains to make such cooperation actually effective.

British influence in Arabia waned steadily after the war, until it was reduced to its customary proportions in 1924. Husain, angered by the imposition of the mandates, rejected the Treaty of Versailles, waived the right of the Hijaz to membership in the League of Nations, refused in 1921 to enter into treaty relations with the British, lost his British subsidy and the good-will of his former ally, but effectively prevented the consolidation of British influence in the Hijaz. Ibn Sa'ud, meanwhile, withdrew his undertaking to allow Great Britain to direct the external relations of Najd and al-Hasa.¹⁴ He too sacrificed his British subsidy and became virtually a free agent once more.

Competent British observers believed in 1920 that it would be impossible to substitute a well-ordered social and political organization in Arabia for the chaotic diversity which prevailed at the moment of the Ottoman collapse.¹⁵ Fifteen years later, however, the greater part of the Arabian Peninsula was under the effective government of the puritan Wahhabi monarch, Ibn Sa'ud. Orderly administration had taken the place of tribal lawlessness, and foreign governments had recognized the stability of the new régime. Ibn Sa'ud's advance was rapid and steady. In 1921 he disposed of his closest rival,

14. Cf. Philby, *Arabia*, cited, p. 290-97.

15. Great Britain, Foreign Office, Historical Section, *Peace Handbooks* (London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1920), Vol. XI, No. 61, p. 41.

Ibn Rashid, and absorbed Hail into his own dominions. In the campaign of 1924-1925 he drove King Husain and his son, King 'Ali, from the Hijaz and became master of the holy cities of Mecca and Madina. In 1926 he also established a protectorate over the greater part of 'Asir, which he annexed outright after an uprising in 1932-1933. In 1934 boundary disputes with Imam Yahya of Yaman came to a head. Sa'udi troops over-ran Yaman and the Imam was soon at Ibn Sa'ud's mercy. The latter, however, renounced the customary fruits of victory in a "treaty of Muslim friendship and Arab brotherhood" (May 20).¹⁶

The Treaty of Taif was regarded as a further victory for Arab nationalist principles. It set a voluntary limit to the conquests of a powerful Arab ruler. It also established a basis on which a federation of independent Arab states might later be built. The only fear of Arab nationalists was lest Yaman's mortification over an unprecedented military defeat should lead it to try conclusions once more with Ibn Sa'ud at a later date, in spite of the satisfactory nature of the settlement.

The manner in which Arab rulers conducted their relations with European states was one of the severest tests of their capacity for independence. The Treaty of Jidda of May 1927¹⁷ between Ibn Sa'ud and the British was the first friendship treaty ever granted by Great Britain in modern times to an Arab state on terms of equality, without reservations inimical to the independence of the state concerned, such as were imposed on Ibn Sa'ud in 1915. Yaman, meanwhile, although it earnestly desired a friendship treaty with the British, refused to pay the price demanded for it—namely evacuation of part of the Aden hinterland occupied by Yaman since the World War. The Imam created something of a stir by concluding treaties with Italy in 1926 and Soviet Russia in 1928 as gestures of indifference toward Great Britain. Although the prac-

16. By the Treaty of Taif Ibn Sa'ud recognized the absolute independence of Yaman. Perpetual peace was to characterize the relations of the two states, which undertook to settle future differences by conciliation. Each renounced all pretensions to territory beyond the common boundary specified in the treaty—a boundary generally considered to be a fair compromise between the claims of the two states. The treaty was accompanied by an arbitration pact, providing for the establishment of *ad hoc* commissions whenever necessity might arise. Texts in *Oriente Moderno*, July 1934, p. 315-23. For friendship treaty of December 1931 between the Imam and Ibn Sa'ud, cf. *ibid.*, March 1932, p. 130.

17. Great Britain recognized the "complete and absolute independence" of Najd-Hijaz. There followed the customary provisions of friendship treaties. In addition Ibn Sa'ud undertook to maintain friendly relations with Arab territories included in the British treaty system, to cooperate in suppression of the slave trade, and to accord British subjects on pilgrimage in the Hijaz facilities equal to those enjoyed by other pilgrims. For text, cf. League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, Vol. LXXI, p. 153.

tical consequences of both treaties were negligible, they substantially increased the Imam's prestige. He did not come to terms with the British until February 1934. Then, in anticipation of war with Ibn Sa'ud on the north, he came to terms with the British in Aden. The treaty of mutual cooperation he then obtained followed the precedent established by the Treaty of Jidda.¹⁸

THE MANDATED TERRITORIES

Political developments in the mandated territories have been more confused and inconclusive than in the Peninsula. Although nationalist organizations are numerous and extremely active, their achievements lag behind those of Ibn Sa'ud, chiefly because the imposition of foreign control under the mandate system has placed severe limitations on Arab initiative in the north. The division of the Fertile Crescent into five distinct territories,¹⁹ each with its separate government and each requiring ultimately a separate system of defense, has seriously weakened the Arab position, both in relation to neighboring countries, such as Turkey and Persia, and in relation to the West. It will be impossible to obliterate artificial boundaries until foreign mandatory control is ended.

Emancipation from foreign control is the first object of nationalists in the mandated territories, but at the moment marked uncertainty prevails as to when this aim can be achieved. Rates of advancement under the mandates have had little apparent relation to the actual political capacity of the inhabitants. Syria, which has had a shorter and less equable parliamentary experience than the Lebanese Republic, is being pushed forward by France, while the Lebanese Republic, which until recent months enjoyed a record of unbroken cooperation with the mandatory, is being held back.²⁰ Iraq, the first territory to be emancipated from the mandate system, has lagged far behind both Syria and the Lebanese Republic in standards

18. For text of Anglo-Yamani treaty, cf. Great Britain, Foreign Office, *Treaty Series*, No. 34, 1934 (Cmd. 4752), London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1934.

19. Iraq, Syria, the Lebanese Republic, Palestine and Transjordan. The combined population of these territories was less than seven million, or about half as great as the population of either Turkey or Persia.

20. A provisional constitution introduced in January 1934, to be made definitive if it proves more satisfactory than the constitution of 1926, concentrates power in the hands of the Lebanese President, appointed by the High Commissioner, and a Secretary of State appointed by the President and responsible to him alone. The chairman of the League mandates commission declared himself dissatisfied with statements of the French accredited representative in 1934 as to why France proposed to retain the Lebanese mandate while extinguishing the mandate in Syria. League of Nations, Permanent Mandates Commission, *Minutes of the Twenty-fifth Session*, p. 99.

of education and general political sophistication. In Palestine, as long as Arab opposition to Jewish colonization persists, it is expected that British authorities will control legislation and administration directly, as in a crown colony. Only thus can the guarantees of the mandate in favor of a Jewish National Home be carried out. The prospects of political emancipation for Palestine are therefore held to be remote. Transjordan, with a population more backward than that of Palestine, already has a Legislative Council and at least the semblance of self-government.

This inequality of treatment calls for an explanation. 'Iraq's early emancipation was directly traceable to the Euphrates rebellion of 1920, whose serious nature²¹ led Great Britain to substitute indirect for direct administration in Mesopotamia. The Arab kingdom of 'Iraq was then established, and equipped with the complete machinery of constitutional government. The mandate was discarded in favor of a series of Anglo-'Iraqi treaties, approved by the League, which facilitated progressive transfer of authority from British to 'Iraqi officials. Great Britain's chief requirement in 'Iraq was to secure British lines of communication to India, and this was adequately done in the final treaty of 1932 under whose terms 'Iraq was admitted to League membership.

In Syria large-scale rebellion did not break out until 1925-1926.²² It came too late to be effective, for France was by then too far committed to the mandate to acquiesce without loss of prestige in demands for its extinction. Anglo-French rivalry in the Near East, however, has a moral as well as a geographical aspect and France felt it necessary to show as successful a record in Syria as the British had done in 'Iraq. Consequently on November 16, 1933, after the liberation of 'Iraq, a Franco-Syrian treaty was signed which provided for Syria's emancipation as soon as the mandated territory could qualify for League membership.

The Syrian Chamber rejected the treaty because it guaranteed neither territorial integrity nor financial and military independence for Syria and reserved more privileges for France than Great Britain had demanded for itself in 'Iraq.²³

In Palestine no uprising has occurred comparable to the Euphrates and Syrian rebellions. The most serious disturbance took place in August 1929, after disorderly demonstrations before the Wailing Wall,

when a total of 249 Jews and Arabs lost their lives. The incident checked Jewish immigration and land purchase only temporarily. Its chief result was that heavier pressure was brought to bear on Great Britain by world Jewry to fulfill its undertakings toward the Jewish National Home.²⁴

The reserve military strength upon which the mandatory powers can draw in case of necessity is overwhelming; Arab nationalists have therefore relied chiefly on legal methods for the promotion of their interests, the violent outbreaks just referred to having been an exceptional feature of their post-war activity. They have maintained political parties in all the mandated territories, have established patriotic clubs and secret societies, have organized demonstrations and boycotts, have sent delegations to London and Paris, have propagandized both agricultural and urban districts, and have memorialized High Commissioners, the League of Nations, the home governments of mandatory powers, and rulers of Muslim countries. Such activities have been best organized in Syria and Palestine. The Palestine Arab Executive, pitted against the Jewish Agency, has kept the High Commissioner informed of Arab demands in connection with all public issues, has frequently petitioned the League, and has directed anti-Jewish and anti-mandate propaganda. The Executive Committee of the Syro-Palestinian Congress, with headquarters in Cairo, has memorialized the mandates commission on the subject of nationalist grievances, particularly in Syria and the Lebanese Republic. It has maintained a permanent office in Geneva, where a French review of Arab affairs has been published under the title of *La Nation Arabe*.

23. The treaty provided for a 25-year alliance between France and Syria, both of which undertook to regulate their foreign policy in conformity with the alliance. In case of a threat of war the two states would consult each other immediately with regard to necessary defense measures. French military aid would be at the disposal of Syria for the duration of the treaty. No limitation was placed on the number of French military, naval or air units to be maintained in Syria. Such forces would be stationed in Syria on an extraterritorial basis. The Syrian army would be trained by French officers and its equipment would correspond to that of the French army. French technical advisers, magistrates and other officials would be provided wherever the two contracting parties decided they were required. Military, judicial and financial agreements would be drawn up when Syria entered the League. An exchange of notes relative to the status of Jabal al-Druze and Ladhikiya made clear the Syrian claim to jurisdiction over these two autonomous regions, but did not indicate precisely what disposition the mandatory power intended to make of them. Cf. *Oriente Moderno*, December 1933, p. 607-12. Also George Antonius, "Syria and the French Mandate," *International Affairs*, July-August 1934. Since the rejection of the treaty the French High Commissioner has kept the Syrian parliament suspended, in defiance of the wishes of the League Council.

24. Elizabeth P. MacCallum, "Great Britain and the Race Problem in Palestine," *Foreign Policy Reports*, August 29, 1934.

21. Casualties were reported to have exceeded ten thousand.

22. Loss of life among inhabitants exceeded six thousand, not including casualties among French troops. For causes and results of the rebellion cf. Elizabeth P. MacCallum, *The Nationalist Crusade in Syria* (New York, Foreign Policy Association, 1928), p. 3-100, 205-51.

WORK OF THE MANDATES COMMISSION

Petitions to the League have not brought the results Arab nationalists believe they have the right to expect.²⁵ The mandates commission itself is dissatisfied with the conditions under which it operates in this respect. The Council does not permit it to hear petitioners officially, so that the views of the mandatory are more adequately represented than the views of the inhabitants, whose interests the mandates commission is bound to protect. Even in times of grave disturbance the Council has not permitted international investigations, fearing that they would intensify disaffection. The mandates commission would welcome an opportunity to gather more information from petitioners, under reasonable safeguards. It does not entertain, however, any petition directed against terms of the mandates of which it is the guardian. Arab appeals have been seriously restricted in consequence, since the main grievances of nationalists concern the terms of the mandates rather than the manner of their application. Moreover the mandates commission, which had compunctions in 1931 about releasing 'Iraq, now shows an increasing reluctance to entertain proposals for emancipation of other territories under mandate, insisting that time should be allowed in which minorities may develop confidence in their Arab governments.²⁶

CONCLUSION

It thus becomes apparent that prospects of early emancipation for any of the territories still under mandate are not bright. Arab-Jewish antipathy in Palestine, marked political immaturity in Transjordan, habitual deadlock in Syria, the ambition of France to remain as long as possible in control of the Lebanese Republic, and the increasing conservatism of the mandates commission combine to make Arab nationalists less optimistic than they were two years ago. In 1932 they supposed that Syria would soon be independent and that it could then be united with 'Iraq under the leadership of King

25. Since the Syrian rebellion was suppressed 230 petitions have reached the League from non-Jewish sources dealing with grievances of the inhabitants of the territories under Class A mandate. Of these 42.6 per cent were rejected on technical grounds. In the case of 33.9 per cent the mandates commission decided to make no recommendation to the Council, so that no action was taken. About two-thirds of the remaining 23.5 per cent received unfavorable replies. Cf. League of Nations, Permanent Mandates Commission, *Minutes* (Sessions 12-25 inclusive), *passim*.

26. Cf. statement of M. Orts: "The conclusion still remains that nations capable of governing themselves cannot be developed under A mandates unless the latter are maintained for several generations." League of Nations, Permanent Mandates Commission, *Minutes of the Twenty-Third Session*, p. 137.

Faisal, to form a reasonably strong Arab state. The premature death of King Faisal in September 1933, followed in November by the rejection of the Franco-Syrian treaty, destroyed immediate hopes of the fulfilment of this program, but in January 1935 plans for holding a pan-Arab conference in Baghdad were revived for the purpose of expediting emancipation of Arab territories.²⁸

Offsetting the disappointments of 1933 was the progress made between 1931 and 1934 in healing the serious breach between Arabs of the Peninsula and of the mandated territories. Both King Faisal of 'Iraq and Amir 'Abdullah of Transjordan had been embittered by Ibn Sa'ud's conquest of the Hijaz and the ejection of their father from his throne in Mecca. A number of border incidents, extending over a period of years, intensified the enmity between Wahhabi tribes on the one hand and inhabitants of 'Iraq, Transjordan and Palestine on the other. In 1930, however, both Faisal and Ibn Sa'ud determined to put an end to a situation which was clearly injurious to Arab interests. In consequence treaties of friendship and arbitration between 'Iraq and the Kingdom of Najd, Hijaz and its Dependencies²⁹ were signed in April 1931.³⁰ In 1934 it was agreed to reopen the long-neglected pilgrim route from 'Iraq across Najd to the holy cities, signaling a new condition of tranquility along the common border. With considerable difficulty Amir 'Abdullah was persuaded by his brother Faisal to make peace with Ibn Sa'ud also. In December 1933, with the exchange of ratifications of a friendship treaty between Transjordan and the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia,³¹ the last serious gap between Peninsula and Fertile Crescent was bridged.

With three independent Arab states—Yaman, Sa'udi Arabia and 'Iraq—established as a result of wartime and post-war activity, the Arab nationalist movement has acquired a substantial basis for continued effort. Pending further changes in the status of mandated territories, its program includes the elimination of sectional interests wherever possible, the training of a new contingent of leaders to replace those lost through deportation and execution, and the encouragement of more active collaboration between 'Iraq, Yaman and the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia, both in purely Arab affairs and in relation to the world at large.

28. *The Syrian World* (New York), January 31, 1935.

29. Reorganized in 1932 as a unitary state under the name of the Kingdom of Sa'udi Arabia.

30. Text in Great Britain, Colonial Office, *Report on the Administration of Iraq, 1932* (London, H.M. Stationery Office, 1933).

31. *Oriente Moderno*, January 1934, p. 35.